



12 March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Up to one in three people who have COVID-19 can spread the virus without knowing. This is because they have no symptoms. To reduce the spread of the virus, we need to identify those individuals. You can do this by carrying out tests at home twice every week, 3-4 days apart.

### Testing students at home

We understand that each child has individual needs. Many children will adapt to testing becoming part of their routine, others will find it more challenging. Taking part in testing is voluntary but incredibly important, and all children will be able to attend school whether they take part or not.

If you agree that it is appropriate for your child to be tested at home, they will be able to collect their home test kits from school. These will be distributed next week in school to students on completion of their third and final in school test in readiness for them to start taking their home tests from Sunday 21 March.

**We would like them to take their tests on Sunday evening and Wednesday evening of each week from Sunday 21 March 2021.**

Tests are free of charge and your child will receive a pack of 7 tests in a box with a leaflet on how to take the test and report the results.

You need to report all test results to [NHS Test and Trace](#) but should only inform the school of positive results.

### Taking the test

Your child should take the test twice a week, on a Sunday and Wednesday evening. A leaflet giving instructions on how to do the test will be given with the test kit. There is also a useful video to show you how to take the test [here](#).

[Help and support is available](#), including instructions in different languages on how to test and report the results and a video showing you how to take the test.

There is no need to keep used test equipment. After the test result has been reported, you can put it in your normal bin (household waste).

This does not replace symptomatic testing. If you have symptoms you should self-isolate immediately, book a PCR test and follow national guidelines.

### What should you do after the LFD test if your child tests positive?

If your child (or anyone in your household or any support bubbles you are part of) tests positive **the child, your household and any support bubbles you are part of** should self-isolate immediately in line with NHS Test and Trace guidance for 10 days.

You need to report your result to [NHS Test and Trace](#) and the school by calling the office on 01476 405200 or by email to [office@bluecoatmeres.co.uk](mailto:office@bluecoatmeres.co.uk).

You should [order a confirmatory PCR test](#) if you are testing at home (confirmatory PCR tests are not needed if the test was conducted at the Asymptomatic Test Site at School/college).

If the result of the test is **unclear (void)** you should do another test.

**Negative and void results** need to be reported to [NHS Test & Trace](#) only, not school.

A negative result does not guarantee that you are not carrying the virus, you should continue to follow social distancing, and other measures to reduce transmission, such as wearing a face mask and regularly washing your hands and observing social distancing.

If you or anyone in your household gets symptoms of the virus you should follow [national guidelines on self-isolation and testing](#).

### **Why testing is important**

Taking part in testing is voluntary and all children will be able to attend whether they take part in testing or not.

I am strongly encouraging all children to take part. Testing at home will allow your child and other children to attend school safely, and help to reduce the spread of the virus in the community.

Please contact Mrs Julie Swatton, our COVID Coordinator, if you have any questions or concerns about home testing.

Thank you for your support.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Barber', written in a cursive style.

Ms C Barber  
Head of Academies

## Some frequently asked questions

### Do I need to give consent?

Students and parents do not give written consent to take part in the home testing programme. Please read the information below on how personal information and test results are shared and the [privacy notice](#).

Once you open the kit you should take and report the results of the tests to [NHS Test & Trace](#). Positive results should also be reported to the academy by telephone to 014176 405200 or by email to [office@bluecoatmeres.co.uk](mailto:office@bluecoatmeres.co.uk).

### Can my child take the test themselves?

Students aged 12-17 should do the test themselves with adult supervision. The adult may help the student to take the test if they need support.

Students aged 11 must be tested by an adult and the adult must report the result.

### Reporting problems or issues with testing

If there is an issue with the test kit, for example something is missing, please report it by calling 119 and please also tell the school.

If an accident or injury happens whilst using the test kit, please seek medical care by calling 111 (or 999 if it is an emergency). Please also report what happened using this website: <https://coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/>

### What type of tests will be used?

We will be sending home Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests. They are a fast and simple way to test people who do not have symptoms of COVID-19, but who may still be spreading the virus.

The tests are easy to use and give results in 30 minutes.

Further information: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-lateral-flow-antigen-testing-for-people-without-symptoms>

### Are LFD tests accurate?

Lateral Flow Devices identify people who are likely to be infectious. These individuals tend to spread the virus to many people and so identifying them through this test is important.

These tests have been widely and successfully used to detect COVID-19 in asymptomatic individuals and are approved by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). The speed and convenience of the tests supports the detection of the virus in asymptomatic individuals, who would not otherwise have got tested.

The tests are highly specific, with low chance of false positives. They are also very sensitive and are able to identify the majority of the most infectious yet asymptomatic individuals. Extensive evaluation has been carried out on the tests and it shows that they are both accurate and sensitive enough to be used in the community for screening and surveillance purposes.

It is important to remember that these tests are only an aid to help stop the spread of the virus and you should continue to follow other guidance such as on wearing face coverings and social distancing.

### How are LFD tests different to PCR tests?

There are 2 main types of test to check if you have coronavirus:

- polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests check for the genetic material (RNA) of the virus in the sample - you send the sample for processing at a lab
- lateral flow device (LFD) tests detect proteins called 'antigens' produced by the virus - LFD tests give rapid results, in 30 minutes after taking the test.

### **What does it mean if my child has a positive result?**

If your child has a positive antigen LFD test result they, their household and any support bubbles they are part of **should self-isolate immediately in line with NHS Test and Trace guidance for 10 days**. You need to report your result to both NHS Test & Trace and your school.

You should order a confirmatory PCR test if you are testing at home (confirmatory PCR tests are not needed if the test was conducted at the Asymptomatic Test Site at school).

You can [book a test here](#).

### **What does it mean if my child has a negative result?**

A negative result does not guarantee that your child is not carrying the virus. So, you should continue to follow social distancing, and other measures to reduce transmission such as wearing a face mask and regularly washing your hands.

### **What if my child has a void result?**

If the result of the test is unclear (void), they should do another one. If the next test is also void, your child should take a PCR test. You can [book a test here](#).

All test results need to be reported to both [NHS Test & Trace](#) and [school/college].

### **Do I need to send the test to a lab?**

No. The LFDs supplied do not need to be sent to a laboratory to get a result and can give a quick result in around 30 minutes. Guidance on self-testing is contained in the 'Instructions for Use' leaflet, which comes with the test kit. There is also a useful video to show you how to administer the test [here](#).

### **How do you report the result?**

Once your child has taken the test, you will need to report the result online (whether it is positive, negative or void) using this [service](#). You also need to tell the school the test result if it is positive. You will receive a text or email from NHS Test & Trace confirming that you have reported your test result.

All positive test results need to be reported to both [NHS Test & Trace](#) and school.

### **Can I or someone else in my household use a test kit sent home from school?**

No, however whole families and households with primary school, secondary school, and college age children, including childcare and support bubbles, will be able to test themselves twice every week from home. This testing can be accessed through the following channels:

- get a rapid test at work, through workplace testing. Ask your employer for more information
- attend a test site to get tested where you will be able to see how to take the test or pick up tests to do at home (you can find your nearest test site via the postcode checker [www.gov.uk/find-covid-19-lateral-flow-test-site](http://www.gov.uk/find-covid-19-lateral-flow-test-site) or check your local council website)
- collect tests to do at home, find your nearest collection site [COVID Test Finder \(test-and-trace.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/covid-19-test-and-trace)

If these options are not possible, there will be a supply of rapid tests for order online for people who need them the most. More information can be found on [www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests](http://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests)

There is [more information available about testing for households and bubbles of students](#).

### **What if my child cannot tolerate a swab down their throat, perhaps due to their disability?**

A child or young person may find it difficult to take a throat swab due, for example, to their having difficulty in understanding instructions, needing to keep their mouth open during the period of swabbing or they are having a strong gag reflex. In such cases, where a combined nose and throat swab is not possible, a nose swab from both nostrils can be taken. Similarly, if reason a nasal swab is not feasible, a throat swab alone will suffice.

## How do I swab my child?

If you are assisting with swabbing as your child needs support, for example due to their special education needs or disability, you can find guidance on doing this here -

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/934735/coronavirus\\_test\\_guide\\_how\\_to\\_test\\_on\\_a\\_child.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/934735/coronavirus_test_guide_how_to_test_on_a_child.pdf)

## How will personal information and test results be shared?

When your child takes an LFD test, you need to report the result. This is so that their test result can be traced, which means that you need to share some information about your child.

You need to tell the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC):

- our child's name
- your child's test result
- the reference number on the test Kit

You will also need to tell your child's school their test result if it is positive.

Under UK law, your child's school or college can collect and store test result data because it is in the 'public interest'.

Schools and colleges will only share information with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) if the test kits used are found to be faulty. If this happens, DHSC will use our information to contact people who used the faulty tests, so that they can be tested again.

When you report test results online, you are sharing information with DHSC. They may share the information with your GP, local government, NHS, and Public Health England. This is so that they can offer your family health services and guidance if your child needs to self-isolate. They might also use your child's data anonymously (without their name or contact information) to research COVID-19, and improve our understanding of the virus.

For more information on how personal data is used for testing please see the detailed [privacy notice](#).